

I believed it was important to get behind a bill that can be enacted in to law this Congress to address these challenges.

One provision that was of particular concern to me is that of "fresh look." The conference agreement on S. 376 does eliminate the "fresh look" provision that continued to be debated this year. "Fresh look" is a policy that, if implemented, would allow the federal government to permit COMSAT's corporate customers to abrogate their current contracts with COMSAT. The conference agreement rejects "fresh look" and preserves the ability of the private parties involved to negotiate contracts so that one party cannot simply walk away from its business obligations without any attendant liability.

This conference agreement does not allow the FCC to take any action that would impair lawful, private contracts or agreements. Both chambers in the 106th Congress emphatically rejected "fresh look" when they passed their own versions of international satellite privatization legislation, and the conference agreement reflects this consensus.

I commend the conferees for including language in the conference agreement that protects private agreements, contracts, and the like. To read the relevant section otherwise would be to dismiss the clear intent of Congress to preserve existing and binding obligations of parties.

CHILD SAFETY LOCKS

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I rise to applaud this morning's bipartisan "firearm summit" at the White House. A commitment to find an agreeable compromise on the Juvenile Justice Bill could not be more timely.

A week ago today, Mr. President, a six-year old living in a drug-infested flophouse in Mount Morris Township, Michigan found a gun under a quilt. The six-year old who found that gun wanted to settle a playground quarrel he had the previous day with his classmate, Kayla Rolland.

He was able to grab the gun from under the quilt because blankets are not trigger locks; they are not a sufficient deterrent to curious children who find guns lying around unlocked. He took the gun and hid it in his pants and brought it to school the next day. No one and nothing prevented him from doing so.

When he arrived at Buell Elementary School, the boy announced to Kayla that she was not his friend. He waited for an opportunity to get back at her. He later said he wanted to scare her.

As his classmates were filing out and heading toward the school library, he had his chance. He did not call her names; he did not pull her hair; he did not hit her. Instead, he pulled the gun from his pants and waved it at two other classmates. He then accurately set his sights on Kayla, pulled the trigger, and killed her. She was all of six

years old. He shot her dead in their first grade classroom.

He had access to the gun because it was not safely stored, and he was able to fire it because the gun did not have a safety lock. Either would have saved Kayla's life.

I have heard skeptics say that our child safety lock proposal, which 78 Senators supported last year, would not have mattered in this case because this gun was stolen. That is only half-true. Had the legal owner of this gun safely locked it with one of the devices mandated under our bill, then the thief might not have stolen it. Had the legal owner of this gun safely locked it with one of the devices mandated under our bill, the child's uncle might not have been able to leave it loaded within the boy's reach. Had the legal owner of this gun safely locked it with one of the devices mandated under our bill, the first grader could not have picked it up and used it with deadly accuracy.

How do we respond to this tragedy? How do we respond to others like it? There is no simple answer. But without a doubt, enacting our modest legislation to mandate that a child safety lock be sold with every handgun would be a good first step.

The distinguished Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, HENRY HYDE, said over the weekend about the stalled gun provisions of the Juvenile Justice bill, "If you can't get dinner, at least get a sandwich." I agree.

Chairman HYDE, who has always been committed to reasonable firearms control, would prefer dinner. And I would too: we ought to pass the whole Juvenile Justice bill. We ought to do it soon. Time is of the essence because while the Congressional attention span is short, children die even when Congress isn't watching. We need to do more to protect children from guns and we need to do it now.

It is a regrettable truth that progress in the Juvenile Justice debate lurches forward only in reaction to unspeakable tragedy. A year ago next month, the massacre at Columbine and the shooting in Conyers, Georgia shocked this Senate into passing common sense proposals to get tough on thugs and violent juveniles. Some of those very same measures, including child safety locks, failed to pass the Senate by wide margins just the previous year.

But the overwhelming approval of the child safety lock proposal demonstrates that the Senate "gets it:" kids and guns do not mix. The House needs to "get it" too. The Center for Disease Control estimates that nearly 1.2 million "latch-key" children have access to loaded and unlocked firearms. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that children and teenagers cause over 10,000 unintentional shootings each year in which at least 800 people die. In addition, over 1,900 children and teenagers attempt suicide with a firearm each year. Tragically, over three-fourths of them are successful.

If preventable suicides and accidents are not enough to convince you that guns must be kept out of the hands of children, consider the following: within the next five years, firearms will overtake motor vehicle accidents as the leading cause of death among American children. The rate of firearm death of children under 15 years old is 16 times higher in the U.S. than in the 25 other industrialized nations combined. And the firearm injury "epidemic," due largely to handgun injuries, is ten times larger than the polio epidemic of the first half of the 20th century.

The very same day that young Kayla Rolland was tragically killed in Michigan, a 12 year old middle school student in the Milwaukee area carried a loaded gun to school. A disagreement the previous day led him to seek revenge by scaring his classmates. Thankfully, he never used the gun and school officials safely confiscated it. This scenario is replicated across the country every day.

Requiring child safety locks will drive the number of juvenile gun deaths down—something everyone approves of.

Mr. President, we have the opportunity to reduce what will soon be the number one cause of death among American children. How can we sit idly by when preventing it is so attainable?

We cannot.

So we ought to pass the Kohl-Chafee-Hatch Child Safety Lock Act. Alone or, better yet, as part of a package, it will help prevent the tragic accidents associated with unauthorized, unlocked, unattended firearms. I am pleased that the President called today's summit to try to move on these urgent matters. I am distressed that it seems, at least today, unproductive. And I pledge to work with the President and the bipartisan Leadership to act now so that we do not have to mourn more preventable innocent deaths.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RESTORATION OF LITHUANIA'S INDEPENDENCE

• Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, on March 18 of this year, at the Lithuanian Cultural Center, in Southfield, Michigan, Lithuanian Americans will gather to mark the tenth anniversary of the reestablishment of Lithuanian independence.

Michigan's Lithuanian-American community also will celebrate the perseverance and sacrifice of their people, which enabled them to achieve the freedom they now enjoy.

I have reviewed the bare facts before: On March 11, 1990, the newly elected Lithuanian Parliament, fulfilling its electoral mandate from the people of Lithuania, declared the restoration of Lithuania's independence and the establishment of a democratic state. This marked a great moment for Lithuania